

11. ADDITIONS TO THE BIRDS OF KUTCH

During recent field work in the neighbourhood of Bhuj (15-30 September) in connection with the Society's project of ringing birds for migration study, the following species were recorded as new for Kutch:

1. *Locustella naevia straminea* Seebohm: The Eastern Grasshopper Warbler.

Winter migrant from northwestern central Asia to practically all India. Previously recorded from Gujarat and Saurashtra.

2. *Phragmaticola aedon* (Pallas): The Thickbilled Warbler.

Winter migrant from Siberia from Tomsk to Manchuria, and N. China. An unexpected find as hitherto known only as a visitor to NE., E., & S. India, presumably migrating from the eastern side.

Two specimens were taken in mist nets near Bhuj on 26 and 29 September. Since it has never before been recorded in NW. or W. India it needs to be ascertained whether these two examples were merely vagrants—in some way under pressure of the phenomenally heavy monsoon in Kutch, Saurashtra, and Gujarat this year—or whether the species has consistently evaded collection or observation in the past. It may be mentioned that but for the fact of their getting caught in the mist nets the birds would most certainly have been overlooked or mistaken for the Great Reed Warbler, *Acrocephalus stentoreus brunnescens* (Jerdon), to which it bears a close superficial resemblance.

3. *Ploceus benghalensis* (Linnaeus): The Blackthroated Weaver Bird.

A specimen taken in the nets, 16 September 1959 (preserved but unfortunately destroyed by a cat).

Not recorded from Saurashtra or Sind; nearest from the Baroda and Kaira districts of Gujarat. This was the only specimen (in female plumage) taken during a fortnight amongst 220 *philippinus*. It is possible that small numbers may be resident (?), or may visit Kutch under favourable conditions produced in years of heavy rainfall. Before the specimen was obtained I had observed (on September 7) two nests (this year's) presumably abandoned owing to flood. They were typical of this species both as to structure and site, but no birds were present to confirm their identity.

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